

REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that the Examiner indicates that claims 2-5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent format, including the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1-5 currently are pending and are subject to examination in the above-captioned patent application. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the above-captioned patent application in view of the following remarks.

In the Office Action mailed June 2, 2005, the Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly being rendered obvious by U.S. Patent No. 5,408,149 to Aneha et al. ("Aneha"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, as follows.

Applicants' independent claim 1 describes, in part, a semiconductor device comprising a macro circuit, wherein the macro circuit comprises "a first switching circuit connected to the reference voltage generation circuit for cutting off the direct current that flows in the reference voltage generation circuit in response to the stop signal in the stop mode; a start signal generation circuit for generating a start signal in response to the stop signal indicating that a mode is changed from the stop mode to the normal mode; and a second switching circuit connected to the reference voltage generation circuit and the start signal generation circuit for starting the reference voltage generation circuit in response to the start signal. "

The Examiner acknowledges that Aneha does not disclose or suggest a start signal generation circuit for generating a start signal in response to the stop signal indicating that a mode is changed from the stop mode to the normal mode, as set forth in Applicants' independent claim 1. However, the Examiner asserts that it would have been

obvious at the time of the invention to modify the semiconductor device described in Aneha to include a start signal generation circuit for generating a start signal in response to the stop signal indicating that a mode is changed from the stop mode to the normal mode, as set forth in Applicants' independent claim 1. Specifically, with respect to Aneha, the Examiner asserts that it is obvious to generate a start signal C in response to a signal indicating that the operational mode is changed back to the normal mode by associating the signal Ac with the signal C. Applicants respectfully disagree.

For example, in Aneha, the signal generated in response to the auto cut-off signal Ac is the signal C that turns off the transistor 22, but this is not the start signal. Instead, Aneha generates the start signal C from the power on-reset signal SM to turn on the transistor 22. The power on-reset signal SM is the signal indicating power on, however, it is not the signal indicating that the operational mode is changed back to the normal mode. Accordingly, in Aneha, one of ordinary skill in the art does not have any motivation to generate a start signal in response to a signal indicating that the operational mode is changed back to the normal mode.

Aneha also does not disclose or suggest that the second switch circuit is connected to the reference voltage generation circuit, as set forth in Applicants' independent claim 1. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that the inverter IN2 or the inverter IN3 corresponds to the second switch circuit of Applicants' independent claim 1. However, neither the inverter IN2 nor the inverter IN3 is connected to the reference voltage generation circuit (regulator 27), as set forth in Applicants' independent claim 1. Accordingly, neither the inverter IN2 nor the inverter IN3 functions as the second switch

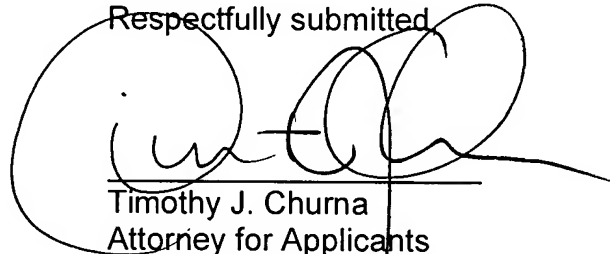
circuit of Applicants' independent claim 1. Instead, the inverter IN2 or the inverter IN3 merely functions as a buffer circuit for providing the transistor 22 with the signal C.

Moreover, Applicants' independent claim 1 is different from Aneha in that Aneha provides the switch circuit 22 with the signal c for starting the supply of power and the signal C for cutting off the power supply, whereas Applicants' independent claim 1 provides the second switch circuit connected to the reference voltage generation circuit, with the start signal for starting the operation of the reference voltage generation circuit and the stop signal indicating a stop mode. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of independent claim 1 at least for the above-described reasons.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that the above-captioned patent application is in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that an in-person or telephonic interview with Applicants' representatives would expedite the prosecution of the above-captioned patent application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney of records. Applicants believe that no fees are due as a result of this response to the outstanding Office Action in the above-captioned patent application. Nevertheless, in the event of any variance between the fees determined by Applicants and those determined by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, please charge any such variance to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 01-2300.

Respectfully submitted,



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